



Plane Talk



October 2004

167th Airlift Wing, WVANG

Next UTAs November 6-7

Unit Returns from ATSO, Volk Field

About 550 unit members returned Sept. 25 from Ability to Survive and Operate (ATSO) training at Volk Field, Wis. The one-week field training exercise focused on survival and war fighting skills and is an important preamble to the upcoming Operations Readiness Exercise and Inspection (ORE/I).

While the unit as a whole did outstanding, several members were singled out by the cadre for individual excellence. They are as follows, with the cadre's comments:

- Lt. Col. Thomas Lilly and Capt. Stephen Sigler's crew – "Outstanding attitudes. Desire to learn ... can go on and on ... great job."

- Maj. Harry Fletcher and MASF – "Took charge of merged MASF ... ready-to-go teamwork. Good attitudes. Ready to do the job instead of complaining about difficult circumstances."

- Capt. Marcia Hendrickson and Tech. Sgt. Robert Graver – "Did great care, did not leave patient, used teamwork and showed signs off urgency."

- Senior Master Sgt. Joseph Reedy – "Was very organized and thoroughly knowledgeable in his duties ... continuously checked on all of the maintenance personnel, ensuring that they were using the buddy system, that all had water and food, and monitored their work/rest cycles ... all done in a way that could only be described as genuinely



caring for his people.

- Senior Master Sgt. Robert Barnes – "Showed to be an expert in folded fiberglass materials. Through his experience and knowledge, he took seven augmentees and assembled the materials, allowing other personnel to perform other important duties at the Rapid Runway Recovery (RRR) area."

- Senior Master Sgt. John Montgomery – "Positive attitude and attention to detail made him a very effective facility manager. Excellent performance by him and his team members."

- Master Sgt. Roger Mathews – "Excelled in directing security forces to aggressively face a crowd of hostile protesters. Provided good direction and leadership after crowd dispersal."

- Master Sgt. Phillip Kolata – "Showed great leadership and very knowledgeable of task. Works well under pressure and takes care of his personnel."

- Master Sgt. Kerry Anderson – "His thorough understanding CONOPS allowed him to develop a plan to quickly return a valuable wing asset to service that had been contaminated by chemical warfare agents."

- Tech. Sgt. Gerald Rhodes – "Teamwork, leadership. Would have saved lives if real-world."



continued on page 2.

Mountaineer Pride Worldwide

Commander's View

I'd like to commend everyone for the excellent effort I saw at Volk Field. The cadre identified some outstanding areas as well as areas of improvement that we need to address.

Unfortunately, there isn't a lot of time for us to catch our breath. We need to analyze the training we received at ATSO, identify training objectives and accomplish those before we leave for Savannah.

Based on what I saw, I think we were as well if not better prepared for Volk Field than we were six years ago. Based on the high level of expectations that have been set on this base, I feel that another outstanding rating is definitely possible.

An outstanding rating would be the best way to leave the C-130 community as we move to the C-5s. No C-130 unit has ever done that before.

However, it is important to remember that we are only one-third of the way through this challenging time. We have to keep our intensity, follow through and finish the job. Then, we'll be able to enjoy the holidays with our families while looking back on how much we accomplished this year – another outstanding year in this unit's history.

Col. Eric Vollmecke



ATSO from page 1.

- Tech. Sgt. Troy Temple – “Did an excellent job with diagnosis and treatment. Knew exactly what to do, how to do it and why he was doing it.”

- Tech. Sgt. Gary Kuhn – “ATSO knowledge enabled him to quickly recognize nerve agent exposure. Began treatment immediately.”

- Staff Sgt. Stephen McKee – “Stopped another security forces member and recognized that member was contaminated. Would not allow entry and also refused to secure member's weapons inside tent because they were also contaminated. Outstanding situation awareness.”

- Staff Sgt. Nathan Lark – “From the beginning, had a sense of urgency. Excellent buddy care, attention to detail.”

- Staff Sgt. Brian Etherington – “His ability to stay calm during the stressfulness after an attack helped reduce the timeliness of an approved MOS and communicating the information to other agencies.”

- Senior Airman Amanda Merritt and Senior Airman Jason Stenack – “Both of these non-medical personnel acted with a sense of urgency, masked their patient properly, and provided great patient care.”

- Senior Airman Tony Huffman – “Demonstrated superior knowledge of CONOPS in identifying a contaminated vehicle that posed a contact hazard to himself and another individual.”

2005 UTA Schedule

8-9 January
5-6 February
5-6 March
2-3 April
30 April - 1 May
4-5 June
9-10 July
6-7 August
10-11 September
1-2 October
5-6 November
3-4 December

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Col. Eric W. Vollmecke	Wing Commander
Col. William R. Gain	Air Commander
1Lt. Andrew Schmidt	PAO
Master Sgt. Ronald K. Newcomer	PA Specialist
Senior Amn. Steven E. Rau	Admin



Commander's Profile

The following is part of a series of profiles of 167th AW personnel who have mobilized and deployed in the past three years as a result of the unit's support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Master Sgt. John R. Cordova Security Forces NCO, Raven Team Member



Military Experience: 19 years total time in service. Enlisted in the 167th Security Forces Squadron in 1985 as a traditional guardsman. Became a technician in 1988, switching to AGR status in 1993. Trained to become a Raven in 1999. Ravens specialize in anti-terrorism measures for aircraft deployed to countries without adequate security.

Deployments since Sept. 11: 38 countries at least once, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Germany, Italy, Russia, China, Japan and "every country in Southwest Asia except Iran, Iraq and Yemen."

Deployment Experiences: "I was working on base Sept. 11 when we heard the news. We immediately went to Bravo and 12-hour shifts. On my birthday on Sept. 28, we got two-year orders to go overseas, but it didn't quite work out that way.

We went to Travis Air Force Base, Ca., filling in for base security there. Then they told us that we needed to pack our bags, that we were going to Pakistan. That changed to Morone, Spain, but we ended up in Oman. We were in Oman from October to December, then we stayed in Bahrain until January.

We were deployed as Ravens with the flight crews on planes going into Kandahar, Afghanistan ... we were on the ground before the Marines. We were doing combat landings, dropping off troops, materials and vehicles into the theater.

It was the first time we performed as Ravens in combat, and it was pretty cool. We were a team of Air Guard members, with only two active-duty Ravens.

We had two hair-raising incidents: The first was over the Persian Gulf one night when an engine exploded and we

thought we had been hit by a ground-to-air missile. It turned out to be a compressor stall explosion, but we didn't know that for about 40 minutes.

The second was on the ground in Afghanistan during a transfer of prisoners to Guantanamo, Cuba. We were on the ground unloading when a firefought broke out between al Qaeda and the Marines. We got out of dodge after we unloaded. [Editor's Note: This was the incident that resulted in the capture of John Walker Lindh, the "American al Qaeda."]

We rotated "home" to Travis. There, we picked up our first presidential mission. We flew with the support planes with the White House staff. We went to Japan, China, Italy and St. Petersburg, Russia.

It was great. In Italy we were parked side-by-side the Pope's plane. It was amazing to see how many people come together to make those events work.

After that, we were supposed to be coming home. They asked if I could take one more mission to the Middle East with the vice president. We picked up a C-5 and flew to 13 Middle Eastern countries in 14 days. They were working on coalition talks.

I came home for 30 days, then received orders to Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany. We flew missions on C-130s, again to Afghanistan, the horn of Africa and Croatia. We were doing relief missions, dropping MREs.

We still had our Russian visas, so we got snagged for a mission to Moscow to support a visit by the Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki. We were housed in the Hotel Metropol on Red Square. You could see Lennon's tomb from our windows – it was awesome."

Thoughts on Deploying: "It was all pretty intense, and the numbers were unreal. We had 617 flying hours on C-17s just when we were in Oman alone. We each went on 14 combat missions a piece.

You look at these countries and it makes you realize how good we have it here. It makes you more thankful for what you have. During my first deployment, we didn't have a phone for three months. It was hard on my 11-year-old son, so I started writing a letter a day ... he was able to pin on a map where I was. It helped a lot.

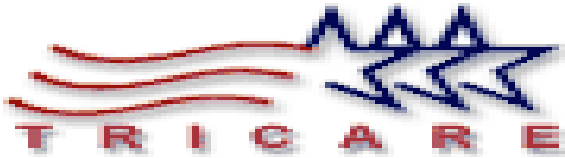
It has affected my older son too. He's in Junior ROTC now and wants to be a pilot.

I'm grateful that everyone came home in one piece. We didn't come back to much fanfare and went right back to work. But we had no complaints – that's the way OPS tempo is now."

Final Thoughts: "When I first came into the unit, the guard was one big family. With everything going on, we've strayed from that a little bit. We need to work on getting back to always taking care of each other.

The best move I ever made was joining this unit. I was a young man just messing around. Someone suggested that I come in, and I'm proud to be here 19 years later.

I've been to 72 countries ... I've gotten a degree, I've gotten to travel and I've gotten experience that I could have never received anywhere else."



Early TRICARE Benefits

Under the National Defense Authorization Act and the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2004, members of the National Guard and Reserve (collectively known as the Reserve Component, or RC) who are issued delayed-effective-date active duty orders for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation, are now eligible for “early” TRICARE medical and dental benefits beginning on the latter of either: (a) the date their orders were issued or (b) 60 days before the member reported to active duty.

According to this law, the 2004 Temporary Reserve Health Benefit Program is in effect November 6, 2003, to December 31, 2004, the date the temporary benefit ends. The Department of Defense implemented this temporary program on July 20, 2004. RC members and eligible family members who have been saving their receipts awaiting implementation of this program may now submit claims to their regional TRICARE Claims Processor to apply for reimbursement for medical expenses incurred during their period of early eligibility. For more information, see

<http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,54382—,00.html>

TRICARE Officials Offer Tips For Contract Transition

Some beneficiaries of the military’s Tricare health-care system may experience long wait times when calling their new regional contractors. Officials suggest conducting business online whenever possible, calling during non-peak hours and visiting Tricare service centers for face-to-face assistance as ways to beat phone congestion during the transition.

Beneficiaries may enroll or change enrollment information online, search for providers in their local area and find information on the health plan as well as links to other key sites for information on claims processing and online appointments. Beneficiaries still may call their regional contractor, but should understand they might experience longer wait times because of high call volume during the transition. The toll-free regional contractor telephone numbers are:

- Tricare North: (877) 874-2273.
- Tricare South: (800) 444-5445.
- Tricare West: (888) 874-9378.

For more information, go to the Tricare Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>

Family Forum

-----167th Family Readiness Group

Care Package Mailing –The U.S. Postal Service recommends mailing care packages by Nov. 1 to make overseas delivery by Dec. 25. With the holiday mailing season beginning soon, the Postal Service also recommends that customers go online and visit the post office that never closes – <http://www.usps.com>. Customers can calculate postage, obtain simplified customs forms and select an international mailing service that’s right for any mailing need.

New Federal Law Called Check 21 – A new federal law, “Check 21,” goes into effect Oct. 28, 2004, which takes away your ability to get back your original paper checks. How Check 21 will impact you:

1. You won’t be able to get your paper checks back.
2. Checks you write will clear sooner, increasing the risk that a check will bounce if funds are not in the account when you write the check.
3. You may not get access to the funds from the checks you deposit any sooner, because the new law does not shorten check hold times.
4. Banks will save money on processing checks, but are not required to share these savings with consumers.

For more information on Check 21, visit <http://www.consumersunion.org/finance/ckclear1002.htm>.

Collecting New and Used Books – A program sponsored by the Martinsburg Journal along with area businesses, called “Newspaper in Education” is taking donations of used books for an upcoming book sale. A used book barrel is located on base next to the Base Contracting office in Bldg. 110. Donations of your unwanted paperback or hardcover books can be placed in the barrel. No magazines please. The books collected will be sold at a used book sale at the Martinsburg Mall. The proceeds will benefit students in all schools in the tri-county area.

Quotable...

Retention and recruiting for the Air Force throughout this crisis over the last three years has remained superb. Even after stop-loss was lifted, people feared that Airmen would be leaving the Air Force in great numbers, especially in the Guard and Reserve; it just didn’t happen.

And so we find ourselves in a position where we have 20,000 people more than we should have by law. I want to try and deal with it without any forced reductions in the force. I don’t want anybody to be forced to leave (who) doesn’t want to. The secretary of the Air Force (Dr. James G. Roche) and I are absolutely dedicated to making sure we don’t break faith with our Airmen.

Air Force Chief of Staff General John P. Jumper

Que Pasa!

Maintenance Squadron – Maj. Robert Barrat

Comings and goings:

Farewell and best wishes to Tech. Sgt. Ron Morris, who is retiring from the Guard this weekend. Ron Morris, known as “the Preacher,” had a total of 35 years in the military with 18 years here at our base.

Master Sgt. Bill Matthews and Tech Sgt. Laura Obitts are both gone this weekend to an information management conference in Nashville, Tenn.

Congrats to Capt. Eric Widmeyer and his wife on the birth of their newborn son, who weighed in at 7 lbs., 11 ozs., and 21 inches long.

Happy Birthday to Staff Sgt. John Keogh in the hydraulics shop. He is 23 years old today and is busy attending Fairmont State University when he is not drilling here at Martinsburg.

In the safety department – use great care and caution when responding to e-mails and Internet use. There is a new breed of criminals who use “phishing” techniques to lure unsuspecting victims into revealing their credit card numbers and other private and sensitive personal information. Also, there are lots of forged cashiers checks being passed around after purchases from Internet sites. Be careful not to be lured into passing a bad check for some unscrupulous person.

Logistics Readiness Squadron – 2nd Lt. Christopher Croson

I recently returned from three months of Logistics Readiness Officer training and was amazed at all of the changes going on in the LRS. This has been yet another big year for us as we prepare for the ORI and get the mission done.

First and foremost, I would like to give a hearty welcome back to our Motor Pool troops: Staff Sgt. Derek Brown, Staff Sgt. James Wood, Tech Sgt. Mark Johnson and Senior Airman David Grim. These guys returned this past week from a seven-month tour in Iraq manning Army convoys. All are doing very well and agree it’s nice to be home with family again. Additionally, Sgt Runkles continues to make an astounding recovery from his battle wounds. The LRS cannot begin to explain how proud and honored we are to serve with brave men of this caliber. They got the mission done!

Regretfully, the LRS is losing some outstanding troops due to transfers and retirements. We would like to say “thank you” to Tech Sgt. Tammie Hoffman for 15 years of dedicated service. However, congratulations on your engagement as you begin your new life in Pennsylvania!

We wish Staff Sgt. Delphia Rogers and Senior Airman Nina Sprinkles all the best, as they are transferring to other units in California and South Carolina, respectfully. These units will be gaining two outstanding troops. Additionally, TMO will miss Senior Master Sgt. Scott Puffenberger, as he has transferred to the Readiness Flight. His dedication and tremendous work ethic will benefit the Readiness Flight just as it did TMO.

Finally, the LRS welcomes Senior Airman Todd Apple and Airman 1st Class Lewis Staubs to the family. Apple has filled the Administrative position in the Fuels Flight, while Staubs has recently returned from BMT and Tech School to begin working in the Distribution Flight.



Wing Names New Inspector General

The 167th Airlift Wing command is proud to announce that Lt. Col. Kelly Washington has been selected to fill the position of inspector general for the unit.

Lt. Col. Washington served previously as chief navigator in the 167th Airlift Squadron, coming to the unit in 1992 after seven years of active duty. In civilian life, Maj. Washington serves as a Montgomery County (Md.) police officer.

“I think Lt. Col. Washington’s civilian experience brings a lot to the table, and he has the ability to do a great job as inspector general,” said Col. Eric Vollmecke, 167th commander.



Chief Master Sgt. Meadows Promoted

Chief Master Sgt. Robert Meadows is congratulated by Col. Eric Vollmecke on his recent promotion. Chief Meadows was appointed as the 167th Airlift Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant in July replacing Chief Master Sgt. Dannie Ritenour.

Political activity rules basically same for active-duty, reserve

by Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Citizen Airmen serving in the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve follow the same rules governing political activity as their active-duty compatriots.

Questions about what Airmen can or cannot do abound in this presidential election year, and some situations have become national news. The rules on political activity are largely the same for all Airmen in uniform, but one area differs.

Although active-duty Airmen are prohibited from holding public office, reservists and guardsmen can, said Philip Donohoe, Air Force Reserve Command director of general law.

"But fulfilling the duties of these offices must stop once a reservist or guardsman puts on the uniform and reports for duty," Mr. Donohoe said.

Air Force reservists and guardsmen who are serving on active duty under Title 10 of the U.S. Code for more than 30 days must comply with the active-duty rules contained in Air Force Instruction 51-902, "Political Activities by Members of the U.S. Air Force." Reservists and guardsmen who are on active duty less than 30 days follow the more general guidelines set out in Paragraph 8 of AFI 51-902.

All reservists and guardsmen must refrain from participating in any political activity while in uniform and from using government facilities for political activities. Guardsmen who perform duties in Title 32 USC status should be aware of any special restrictions on political activities imposed by their respective state authorities.

While active-duty Airmen may not campaign for, or hold, elective civil office, reservists and guardsmen are not so constrained. As long as they are not serving on extended active duty — defined to be active duty under a call or order for more than 270 days — reservists may campaign for, and hold, partisan or nonpartisan civil office. It must be held in a private capacity and must not interfere with the performance of military duties.

When reservists and guardsmen campaign for elective office, they must be careful to avoid using their military status as a political selling point. For example, a reservist campaigning for office should not use political flyers that show the reservist in his or her military uniform.

Department of Defense Directive 1344.10, "Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty," gives guidance to all military branches and is the source for AFI 51-902. Political activities of civilian federal government employees fall under the guidance of the Hatch Act, and the Joint Ethics Regulation, DOD 5500.7-R, Chapter 6, "Political Activities."

167th AW Promotions



TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL
Kelly B. Washington AS



TO SECOND LIEUTENANT
Kevin S. Diamond CES



TO CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT
Robert R. Meadows AW



TO TECHNICAL SERGEANT
Thomas G. Bosley APS
Burnett L. Deyerle IV AS
James A. Lavigne OSF
Karen D. Minch AES



TO STAFF SERGEANT
Jon C. Alexander MXS
Brandon M. Ballard AES
Charles W. Kelican AES
Matthew T. Wrenn MXS



TO SENIOR AIRMAN
John W. Matlock APS

Retirements

Civil Engineering Squadron
Chief Master Sgt. Ronald L. Ware Sept. 27
Master Sgt. Charles S. Ardinger Sept. 4

Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron
Master Sgt. Eric D. Arvidson Sept. 27

Maintenance Squadron
Master Sgt. Michael W. Gossard Sept. 14

Worth Repeating

"Once we have a war there is only one thing to do. It must be won. For defeat brings worse things than any that can ever happen in war."

Ernest Hemingway

Medical Officials Clarify Cosmetic Surgery Policy

Cosmetic and reconstructive surgeries performed by Air Force doctors are part of essential training, but elective cosmetic procedures such as breast augmentations are not routinely available as benefits to servicemembers and their families. Recent published reports in civilian media suggested that elective procedures are prevalent in the military health-care system.

All beneficiaries are eligible for these procedures, but there are policies in place to govern this aspect of the military health-care system. Air Force doctors provide cosmetic surgery on a space-available basis, but it cannot constitute more than 10 percent of a plastic surgeon's workload.

Plastic surgery in the Air Force is available at Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio; Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; Keesler AFB, Miss.; Travis AFB, Calif.; and Andrews AFB, Md. For more information, read the Air Force Print News story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008367>.

DFAS Launches myPay Enhancements

myPay, the online pay account information system of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) inaugurates new enhancements and upgrades for all users. All myPay (<https://mypay.dfas.mil>) users:

- can assign a "restricted access PIN" to a designated individual to view the information, but cannot make any changes to the allotments or account information
- can add a personal email address, so users are notified of pay changes and other items of interest All active duty Army, Navy and Air Force members:
- can view 12 months of Leave and Earning Statements
- are able to start, stop and change financial allotments and savings bonds.

myPay is a web-based system that allows customers to access and control their pay account information. Receipt of electronic LES and other financial information eliminates the risks associated with postal delivery. myPay provides members up-to-date information on pertinent changes by delivering notices to users' email addresses. Today, myPay has nearly three million users with customized PINs and serves all military members, military retirees and annuitants, Department of Defense civilian employees and Department of Energy employees.

Spouses To Teachers Pilot Program

The Department of Defense has tasked DANTES to establish and manage a new pilot project titled Spouses to Teachers. This program will provide information and assistance to spouses interested in pursuing a teaching career. Spouse to Teachers will be piloted in six states that have a large military population and need for public school teachers. These states are California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Texas, and Virginia. A Spouse to Teachers counselor/administrator will be available in these states to provide guidance and assistance to eligible spouses interested in teaching in these states. The Spouse to Teachers program will be housed in the state Troops to Teachers office. Pending an evaluation of interest and activity, additional states may be added in the future. Contact information for the pilot state offices will be available on the Spouses to Teachers web site, www.spousestoteachers.org.

Information resources will include state teacher certification requirements, routes to certification, employment potential, financial assistance resources, and assistance with employment searches. Funding will be available to reimburse eligible spouses for expenses incurred to take examinations required for state teacher certification. A web site will also be available providing links to information resources that will be valuable to those exploring a career in public education. The web site and state offices will be available as of 7 September 2004.

Eligible spouses will include spouses of active duty personnel, spouses of members of the selected reserve and National Guard, and spouses of members of the individual ready reserve (IRR) recalled to active duty. All spouses will be required to provide a copy of their ID card verifying their sponsor's affiliation with one of the above eligible service categories.

A DANTES Spouses to Teachers administrator/counselor will be employed to oversee the project and will be under the direction of the Chief, Troops to Teachers. The toll free number for Spouses to Teachers will be 1-800-452-6619; DSN 922-1241, and commercial 850-452-1241. The email address will be stt@voled.doded.mil and the web site address will be www.spousestoteachers.org.

DANTES will provide additional information about this program in the Information Bulletin and on the McNet. If you have any questions regarding Spouses to Teachers, contact John Gantz, Chief, Troops to Teachers at 850-452-1320 or DSN 922-1320, E-mail jgant@voled.doded.mil.





Air Force History and Heritage

October



Oct. 23, 1909 — Lt. Benjamin D. Foulois took his first flying lesson from Wilbur Wright.

Oct. 14, 1947 — The first faster-than-sound flight is made by Capt. Charles E. Yeager at Muroc Air Base, Calif., in a rocket-powered research plane, Bell XS-1 rocket ship.

Oct. 15, 1948 — The Combined Airlift Task Force created to increase efficiency during the Berlin Airlift.

Oct. 1, 1958 — NASA is established to control nonmilitary scientific space projects.

Oct. 1, 1959 — The USAF Aerospace Medical Center activates at Brooks AFB, Texas, absorbing the former School of Aviation Medicine, the USAF Hospital at Lackland AFB, Texas, and other facilities

Oct. 31, 1959 — A Series D Atlas ICBM goes on alert at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. This is the first American ICBM equipped with a nuclear warhead to be placed on alert status.

Oct. 14, 1962 — A U.S. Air Force reconnaissance flight proves the existence of Russian missile sites in Cuba.

Oct. 27, 1962 — A 4080th Strategic Wing U-2 reconnaissance aircraft piloted by Maj. Rudolf Anderson Jr. is shot down over Cuba. Lost with his aircraft, Major Anderson posthumously receives the first Air Force Cross for his sacrifice.

Oct. 22, 1970 — First attempted simultaneous launch of two Minuteman II ICBMs succeeded at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

Oct. 24, 1974 — The Space and Missile Systems Organization successfully launches a Minuteman I ICBM from a C-5A Galaxy cargo aircraft.

Oct. 1, 1979 — First phase of Space Defense Operations Center began limited operations in Cheyenne Mountain Complex, Colo., sharing computer terminals and communications with Air Defense Command Intelligence Watch.

For more information of Air Force history and heritage, visit the Air Force Link history section at <http://www.af.mil/history/>.

**167th AIRLIFT WING
VISION 2004
A WORLD CLASS AIRLIFT WING
CAPITALIZING ON OUR
STRENGTHS AS A MILITIA
FORCE TO ACCOMPLISH ANY
MISSION, ANY PLACE, ANY TIME**

3.5% Pay Raise for Servicemembers

The Defense Appropriations Bill signed into law last month will fund the global war on terror, personnel initiatives and further the transformation of the American military. The \$417 billion bill funds the military for fiscal 2005. Congress must pass a second bill, the National Defense Authorization Act, before the department can spend the money. Concerning personnel, the bill provides a 3.5 percent across-the-board pay raise for servicemembers, eliminates out-of-pocket housing expenses and fully funds the Defense Health Program. The president said the raise brings the total pay raise over the last four years to nearly 21 percent.

See the 2005 Pay Charts at <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,49020,00.html>

General Emmett Paige Scholarships

Sponsored by the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association, the General Emmett Paige Scholarship provides funding to veterans, military personnel, and their family members who are majoring in specified fields in college to the tune of \$2,000. This program is open to veterans and persons on active duty in the uniformed military services and to their spouses or dependents who are currently enrolled full-time in an accredited 4-year degree-granting institution in the United States.

Graduating high school seniors are not eligible, but veterans entering college as freshmen may apply. Spouses or dependents must be sophomores or juniors. Applicants must be U.S. citizens, be of good moral character, have demonstrated academic excellence, be motivated to complete a college education, and be working toward a degree in engineering (aerospace, chemical, computer, or electrical), mathematics, physics, or computer science with a GPA of 3.4 or higher. The deadline to apply is in February. For more information, see <http://www.military.com/Education/ScholarShip/Profile/1,14220,0546,00.html>

Six Tips to Keeping Important Personal Records Safe

Everyone's thought about it. If you had to evacuate your home quickly because of a natural disaster, what would you take with you? After making sure family members were safe, treasured items like keepsakes, family photos, or heirlooms probably come to mind. But what about important financial documents? Making sure your personal records are well organized and safe ahead of time is the key to protecting them when things get chaotic. Here are six tips for making sure your important papers are protected:

1. Collect important documents related to your finan-

cial transactions.

2. Choose a single location to file these documents. Use a fireproof box or safe-deposit box to file documents away. This is especially important for things like marriage records, divorce decrees, and birth certificates. Keep one key in the house and one with another person, such as a trusted relative or attorney.

3. Make copies now. Create certified copies, in cases of birth certificates and other important papers, when they are required by government agencies.

4. Use plastic covers. Protect important original documents in plastic covers. This will prevent you from accidentally giving away the originals.

5. Let appropriate people know. Telling the right people where important information will be located will help in case you're not available when the info is needed.

6. Identify the records that you or your financial institutions keep only on computer. They may not be accessible during power failures, so make printouts.

For more information, see http://www.military.com/NewContent/0,13190,Personal_Records,00.html

Welcome to the 167th Airlift Wing

Gary W. Burrows III	LRS
Sean M. Corbett	APS
Lindsay R. Fletcher	LRS
Russell A. Hurt	AMXS
Sara A. Miller	MXS
Gregory D. Simerlink	SVF
Bethany D. Weber	MDG
Terry G. Whittington, Jr.	APS

Survey Will Measure Personnel Services Delivery

Airmen can help make their personnel services delivery system better through survey feedback. The e-mail surveys sent to participants will be anonymous and responses will not be linked to e-mail addresses. While the participation in the survey is voluntary, a high response turnout will enhance the study.

The PSD transformation uses technology to place the capability for conducting routine personnel and pay transactions into the hands of Airmen via a Web-based system and contact centers, while minimizing the need for face-to-face dealings in an office.

For more information, go to the Air Force Link story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008622>.

NMPRC Files *Will Not Be* Destroyed

It has been rumored that the National Military Personnel Records Center (NMPRC) in St. Louis, Mo. was planning to automate their stored military records and intended to discard all the hard copies of these documents, unless service members requested them. Upon contacting the center it was discovered that the facility has no plans of automating the files in the near future, nor will they throw away anyone's records. However, service members are eligible to retrieve a copy of the files, if they so desire.

Requests should be directed to:
National Personnel Records Center
9700 Page Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63132

You may also call 314-801-9195 or visit <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. Requests are expected to take 2-4 weeks for completion and service members can email mprstatus@nara.gov to check the status of their request. For more information regarding military records, see <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,31459,00.html>

New Joint Command Stands Ready To Defend Capital

A new headquarters at Fort Lesley J. McNair, D.C., will consolidate the military mission to help defend the nation's capital. The Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region will guard America's center of gravity.

The command unites all Defense Department elements and the Coast Guard. The Army Military District of Washington, the Naval District of Washington, the Marine Corps National Capital Region Command and the Air Force's 11th and 89th wings are the major component commands in the new joint force. Normally, there will be between 3,000 and 4,000 people in the command. For more information, go to the Air Force Link story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008747>.

Working Families Tax Act Passed

A tax package that won approval in Congress last week will help troops in combat. The Working Families Tax Relief

Act will allow service members who are trying to qualify for tax credits to include as income any tax-exempt combat zone military pay and bonuses. Several service members deployed to combat zones have seen their tax credits reduced because their combat zone tax exclusions have placed them below the federal income tax level needed to qualify for these tax credits: the Earned Income Tax Credit — worth \$4,200 or more to someone with two or more children — or the Child Care Tax Credit — worth up to \$1,000. According to the Government Accountability Office, roughly 10 percent of enlisted members were being affected. For more information, see this conference report: http://rpc.senate.gov/_files/CFRFamTaxMW092304.pdf.

"Space A" Travel for Military Families Continues

According to the Fleet Reserve Association, the one-year test to expand space-available or "Space A" travel privileges to family members of active-duty and retired personnel traveling within the Continental United States has been extended. Under the Space-A test phase, the family members of active-duty and retired military personnel are able to travel aboard military flights when accompanied by their sponsors. The policy was established in December 2000 as quality-of-life privilege for military service people and their families. To register for space-available travel, active-duty sponsors must be on leave or a pass and remain in the status through the entire travel period.

For more on Space-A travel and the latest in travel deals, visit our Travel Center at <http://www.military.com/Travel>

Annual Combined Federal Campaign Kicks Off

The 2004-2005 Combined Federal Campaign began Sept. 1 in the continental United States and runs through Dec. 15. Last year, federal workers reached into their pockets to donate nearly \$250 million during the campaign.

On average, one in four federal employees or their family members will benefit from the CFC charities this year alone. Donors may designate which charity, or charities, receives their money by filling out a pledge card. Contributions can be in cash, check or by payroll deduction. For more information go to the CFC Web site at www.opm.gov/cfc.

